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->From the Editor's Keyboard           "Saying it like it is!"
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It's been another one of those weeks, so in the absence of time, we'll just get right to this week's issue - lots of interesting stuff this week!

Until next time...

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->A-ONE's Game Console Industry News - The Latest Gaming News!
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## Contest Winners Given Early Access to Game, Reward Devs by Cracking and Releasing It to Pirates

Modern Combat 5 has been cracked and uploaded to multiple torrenting websites over the weekend. MC5 is a first person shooter for iOS, Android and Windows 8. The developer and publisher, Gameloft, ran a contest recently and invited players into the game early. One of those winners apparently cracked the game and began distributing it online.

Modern Combat's dev team is not pleased with the situation.

"As you can imagine I am really pissed off," wrote Gameloft community manager Florian Weber on the Modern Combat 4 Hub Facebook group. "To anybody who got MC5 already, shame on you! We are making games for you and all you can do is pirate them?"

"Anybody which is talking to me and shows in some way that he already has MC5 will get an instant ban. Seriously, this is why we can't have nice things."

In a formal statement Gameloft says that they say they are taking action to lock down any copies of the game that have leaked out.

"Following the release of several pirated versions of Modern Combat 5 prior the release of the game," reads the statement, "we have turned on our anti-piracy systems and now all illegitimate users on a non-official version have been incapacitated."

"Those who used this pirated version of the game just need to wait for the official game release which is on Thursday July 24. We will continue to stay alert and respond adequately to all hacking attempts."

### LeBron James Is Better at Video Games Than You

LeBron James' childhood friends could never defeat him in Shaq Fu, and today, he's just as tough to beat in a game of Madden as he is on the basketball court all because of his incredible memory.

James is blessed (and cursed) with an eidetic memory, reports ESPN. It's partly responsible for his success in the NBA: The basketball superstar often amazes teammates, opponents, coaches and reporters with his incredible ability to recall specific game situations from long ago. He's able to remember details like the tactics teams used to defend him and the exact locations of the shots he took.

He also memorized the entire move list in Shaq Fu. Featuring basketball star Shaquille O'Neal, the much-maligned 16-bit fighting game from Electronic Arts debuted on Genesis and SNES in 1994 years before GameFAQs existed. (O'Neal and a studio called Big DeeZ Productions raised more than \$473,000 on Indiegogo earlier this year to fund the development of Shaq Fu: A Legend Reborn, a sequel to the original game.)

"LeBron was the only one who had memorized all the moves and so he'd win every time. We all thought he definitely was cheating," said Brandon Weems, one of James' lifelong friends, in an interview with ESPN.

According to Weems, who is now an assistant basketball coach at Oakland University, James continues to stay one step ahead of his buddies.

"When you play Madden with him now you have to be careful which teams you take, because he will know what your game plans were in the past when you've played with him and he'll pick the opposing team knowing what plays you want to run," Weems added. "You better save your favorite play, too, because he'll remember what you ran before in situations and be ready for it."

James, 29, returned to the Cleveland Cavaliers, his hometown team and the place where he began his NBA career in 2003, earlier this month. He spent the previous four seasons with the Miami Heat.

## 5 Tips for Becoming a Pro Gamer

You fancy yourself a pretty solid League of Legends player. Or maybe you're untouchable when it comes to Halo. And now you're ready to see if you've got what it takes to earn a living at it.

Pro gamers can certainly make bank. 25-year old Lee Jaedong Jae Dong has earned more than \$504,000 in 47 tournaments. And Johnathan "Fatal1ty" Wendel pocketed more than \$450,000 in tournaments (and a lot more in endorsement deals).

But success in the e-sports world takes a lot more than just a lot of practice and studying the moves of your opponents. We spoke with a few e-sports champs to get their tips on what people can do to best prepare for competition.

1. Know your weaknesses. No matter how good you are, you're not perfect and it helps to know exactly where you fall short.

Yoan "ToD" Merlo has been called the best StarCraft II player from France and will be casting and commentating at this weekend's Red Bull Battle Grounds event in Atlanta. But he knows where the holes in his game are.

Try and prepare something for everybody, he says. Try to work on your weaknesses. So me, for example, my Protoss vs. Terran is my weakest matchup. I need to make sure I work extra on that matchup to make sure I don't lose to the first good Terran I meet.

Sean "Day[9]" Plott, a former StarCraft II pro player who went on to become a well-known e-sports personality, agrees, adding that self-awareness is what makes a good player great.

Obsess on your weakness and faults as a player, he says. All you are doing as a pro is trying to identify your mistakes and weaknesses and there is no weakness that is unfair to identify. It could be that your win rate seems to go down after about three hours. What is causing that? What is your attempt at a solution? It's the willingness to zoom in, and really identify the problems, and then practice them that makes a pro player so good.

2. Stay rested. There will be plenty of opportunities at e-sport events to go out and party. And they can be tempting. But to be a winner, you'll have to resist the pressures to stay out late and socialize.

I think one of the things that really throws people off is you don't realize how stressful the travel can be at times, says Nathan "Nathanias Fabrikant", an e-sportscaster and player for ROOT Gaming. It's really hard to balance, when you're going to a lot of events. [M]ake sure that you sleep enough and that you have time to practice in between tournaments.

There is such a thing as too much sleep, though.

It's very hard to play your A-game all the time, ToD says. For me, at least, on average, I feel like I can play my A-game three or four hours per day. That's it. Make sure you get some good sleep. At least eight hours, but you shouldn't sleep 12 hours, or your cycle will be messed up for day two.

3. Practice under poor conditions.?Winning on your home setup is one thing, but tournament conditions won't always be ideal. In fact, they'll often be less than optimal. Prepare for that.

Practice all the variables, Day[9] says. With the thermostat set to 60 degrees. To 80 degrees. With your chair too low or too high. All these sort of things are going to be really useful because even if the thermostat doesn't change a lot at the tournament, you have those extra reassurances of control.

4. Prepare for an emotional roller coaster.?No matter how ready you think you are, the emotions that flood players when a tournament rolls around can be overwhelming.

The number one thing that an aspiring player at their first tournament may face is that everything in your mind will be completely overshadowed by this ridiculous swing of emotion, Day[9] says. In fact, the most trying test for any competitor is learning to manage those emotions, and how to use them positively, and play past the really negative ones.

It s not just newbies who have to deal with that emotional tidal wave. Veterans face it, too.

There s a couple pro gamers that, when they re on their A-game, they re almost unstoppable, Nathanasias says. And if they re not in the right mind-set, or they haven t been taking care of themselves as much as they should have, they have a lot more difficulty finding success.

5. Have a ritual.?Pre-game habits aren t restricted to traditional athletes. A routine can help you get into the right mind-set for a match, something that s crucial for victory.

A lot of players have [rituals], Day[9] says. Maybe they listen to music. Maybe they do sprints before their game. Leading up to the tournament, players will do this before practice, and it helps to become [a] training mechanism that your body responds to. No matter what you're feeling, it doesn't matter — you just listen to that song before your match, and you get into the zone. It's essentially practicing the emotional control, with a ritual that is meditative and helps get you in the mind-set.

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->A-ONE Gaming Online      -      Online Users Growl & Purr!
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# Pong: The Game That Was Never Meant to Be

Pong was the video game industry's equivalent of the Big Bang. Without it, it's impossible to know where or if things would be today.

That makes it all the more remarkable to hear that Pong was never meant to be seen by the public.

Instead, the game started as a simple training exercise, according to the folks at TodayIFoundOut. Atari founder Nolan Bushnell assigned the idea to Allan Alcorn to let him get his feet wet in coding a game, since Alcorn had no game design or development experience at the time.

The rules were simple: Make a game with two paddles, one moving spot for a ball, and digits that displayed the score. Alcorn, though, thought that was boring, so he added a few flourishes, like having the ball bounce off paddles at different angles, and speeding things up after each return.

When Bushnell and his partner Ted Dabney saw the result, they were impressed but still unconvinced that the public would care about the game. That led them to put the now famous prototype in Andy Capp's Tavern to see how it did. (If players liked it, they figured, they'd sell the game to Bally or Midway, who were partners at the time.)

You probably know the story from there. Pong was an instant hit. The machine took in so many quarters that it malfunctioned and people began lining up outside the pub before it opened, just so they could play it.

Bushnell knew he had a hit on his hands, but he downplayed it to his two larger partners, persuading them to withdraw their rights to buy Pong. Once that hurdle was completed, Atari released an arcade version of the game (which took in a then-unprecedented \$35 to \$50 per machine per day).

A short while later, the home version was launched and with that, the video game industry was on its way.

Not a bad journey for a happy fluke.

#### A Space Invaders Movie Is In The Works at Warner Bros.

Taito's arcade classic shoot 'em up Space Invaders and its unique tale of invading aliens laying waste to the Earth in predictable waves are being mined for a feature film, The Wrap reports.

Rights to the 1978 arcade game have reportedly been acquired by studio Warner Bros., and screenwriter-producer Akiva Goldsman is attached to produce the Space Invaders movie. Goldsman's credits include films like Lone Survivor, I Am Legend and the Paranormal Activity series, as well as TV show Fringe. He most recently wrote and directed Winter's Tale for Warner Bros.

Space Invaders served as inspiration for the upcoming movie Pixels, which stars Adam Sandler and Peter Dinklage and was based on a Patrick Jean-directed short film of the same name (pictured above). It too will feature an alien invasion inspired by and, in the film, caused by classic arcade games.

Hollywood has designs on turning other classic arcade games, like Asteroids and Missile Command, into feature films.

## Home Alone Director Will Stuff These Classic Game Characters Into An Adam Sandler Movie

Donkey Kong, Pac-Man, Frogger and more will make an appearance in the upcoming film Pixels, thanks to recent partnerships with several game companies, Sony Pictures Entertainment announced.

Pixels stars Adam Sandler, Michelle Monaghan and Peter Dinklage's mullet in a movie inspired by the short film of the same name. After aliens mistake footage of classic arcade titles for a threat from Earth, Sandler and friends must team up to protect the planet from their game-inspired assault. The list of partners and their relevant properties is as follows:

Atari Interactive (Asteroids, Breakout, Centipede and Missile Command)  
Konami Digital Entertainment Co., Ltd. (Frogger)  
Bandai Namco Games Inc. (Pac-Man, Galaga and Dig Dug)  
Nintendo (Donkey Kong)  
Columbia Pictures Industries, Inc. (Q\*bert)  
Taito Corporation (Space Invaders)  
Warner Bros. Interactive Entertainment (Joust, Defender, Robotron and Wizard of Wor)

According to director Chris Columbus, there would have been "no way" to make the movie without the classic game characters.

"They are as important to the film as the roles that Adam [Sandler], Kevin [James], Michelle [Monaghan], Peter [Dinklage], Josh [Gad] and Brian [Cox] are playing," Columbus said. "It was a real thrill to see everything come together exactly as we envisioned it, and we're grateful to have all of these fantastic companies on board."

Previously, the director said classic characters will be "fully realized, three-dimensional, pixelated characters that are quite threatening."

The original short, created by Patrick Jean, featured cameos from characters such as Donkey Kong, Frogger and squadrons of Space Invaders. Because of this, producer Allen Covert said, it was "critical" to use them in the movie.

"We approached them with a deep love for their characters and a respect for the elements that make them unique and iconic, and we've worked with the companies to incorporate those elements into the film," Covert said.

For more on how Pixels went from a short to a full-fledged movie, check out our interview with Jean and screenwriter Timothy Dowling. Pixels hits theaters May 15, 2015.

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## Google Grants Half Of Right To Be Forgotten Requests

Google revealed that it grants half of the de-index requests it receives at a meeting with the European Court of Justice.

The search giant, along with Yahoo and Microsoft, had been called before the court to answer questions about how they have handle de-indexing requests resulting from the courts right to be forgotten ruling, which requires the search engines to remove links to content deemed to be inaccurate, outdated or irrelevant, ZDNet reports.

However, concerns have arisen over Google's current practices in complying with requests. The company notifies the publisher of the links to be de-indexed, which often leads to even greater public attention toward the content, somewhat defeating the purpose of the request in the first place.

So far, few details have emerged from the meeting, although TechCrunch reports that Google has confirmed that rejects about one third of de-index requests, asks for more information for 15 percent of requests and grants about half of all requests.

According to PCWorld, officials asked a number of questions about the de-indexing process, such as the legal basis for sending notifications to publishers and displaying them in censored results, both of which Google does. The meeting was also intended to address the question of on which domains the results would be de-indexed. Google, for example, has drawn criticism for removing results from its European domains but not its .com domain.

Although the answers to these questions have not yet been announced, the three companies were asked to submit further answers in writing by the end of the month.

## 'Canvas Fingerprinting' Online Tracking Is Sneaky But Easy To Halt

A method for tracking users across the Internet called canvas fingerprinting is simple to stop, but average Internet users may not know how to do it.

A research paper concluded that code used for canvas fingerprinting had been in use earlier this year on 5,000 or so popular websites, unknown to most. Most but not all the sites observed used a content-sharing widget from the company AddThis.

The researchers, from KU Leuven in Belgium and Princeton University, described how companies are looking for new ways to track users in order to deliver targeted advertising and move away from cookies, which can be easily deleted or blocked.

The cookie is dead, wrote Rob Shavell, a cofounder of Abine, a company that develops privacy tools, via email. Advertising and data collection businesses need to evidence that their targeting is working for paying clients, he wrote, but most users are unaware of how they're being tracked in new ways.



Following media coverage, AddThis admitted it ran a five-month test using canvas fingerprinting within its widget but said the canvas fingerprinting code was disabled earlier this month. Acknowledging privacy concerns, the company said it would provide more information on such tracking tests before starting one.

It worked like this: When a browser loaded the AddThis widget, JavaScript that enabled canvas fingerprinting was sent. The script used a capability in modern Web browsers called the canvas API that allows access to the computer's graphics chip, which is intended for use with games or other interactive content.

An invisible image was sent to the browser, which rendered it and sent data back to the server. That data can then be used to create a fingerprint of the computer, which could be useful for identifying the computer and serving targeted advertisements.

But of several emerging tracking methods, canvas fingerprinting isn't the greatest: it's not terribly accurate, and can be blocked.

Canvas fingerprinting may work best on smaller websites with stable communities, wrote Wladimir Palant, creator of Adblock Plus browser extension, in a blog post. But it is less effective on a larger scale.

As soon as you start talking about millions of users (e.g. if you want to track users across multiple websites) it is just too likely that different users will have exactly the same configuration and won't be distinguishable by means of canvas fingerprinting, he wrote.

Widgets such as AddThis can be entirely blocked with tools such as Adblock Plus or DoNotTrackMe from Abine, both extensions that can block web trackers.

DoNotTrackMe, for example, can spot a browser making a request to AddThis for content and block it, meaning AddThis couldn't transmit JavaScript for canvas fingerprinting, wrote Andrew Sudbury, CTO and cofounder of Abine, via email.

Adblock Plus can also block these kinds of JavaScript requests, but not by default, wrote Ben Williams, public relations manager for Adblock Plus, in an email.

The extension is intended to be used with a series of filters, or lists, that enable certain kinds of blocking. Williams wrote that a user would need to install the EasyPrivacy filter. The AddThis widget would be blocked, along with any other JavaScript, he wrote.

## Google Signs \$1 Billion Deal To Buy Twitch

Has the long-rumored merger of two online video titans finally occurred?

Venturebeat is reporting Google has signed a deal to buy game-streaming service Twitch, for \$1 billion. (Both companies are declining to comment on the report.)

While nothing official has been announced - and the \$1 billion figure is

not confirmed - gaming industry observers have been expecting a team-up of the two companies since May, when Variety and The Wall Street Journal reported the deal was being discussed.

Google's YouTube division is reportedly leading the charge here - and the incorporation of Twitch's live-stream broadcasting technology could be a big shift in its day-to-day operations.

Assuming that \$1 billion price tag is correct, this would be the fifth largest acquisition in Google's history - right below the company's 2006 purchase of YouTube for \$1.65 billion - underscoring the site's importance to Google.

Twitch, which was founded in June 2011, has seen its profile skyrocket since last November, thanks in large part to partnerships with Microsoft's Xbox One and Sony's PlayStation 4.

The platform boasts a community of over 50 million unique users each month, with 1.1 million broadcasters - and visitors averaging 106 minutes per day on the service. (Total monthly views top 13 billion minutes. That works out to a bit shy of 25 years, by the way.)

Simply put, it has become the Internet's go-to spot to watch and broadcast game streaming. (Among its investors is game publisher Take-Two Interactive Software.)

Those are numbers YouTube envies - and could be a nice complement to the growing number of game-focused celebrities on the site, like Sweden's Felix Arvid Ulf Kjelberg, better known as PewDiePie, who has nearly 29 million subscribers.

## Apple To Release Free Beta Version of New Operating System

Beginning July 24, a public beta of Apple's new operating system for Mac will be available to the general public to try out.

OS X Yosemite features a fresh new design, flatter icons, translucent toolbars and windows, and plenty of increased integration with your iPhone and iPad.

It's important to note that the Yosemite beta is exactly that, a beta, so there's always the chance for bugs and glitches to emerge. If you give the new operating system a try, it's a good idea to make sure you've backed up your computer first.

Not every feature promised for the consumer release of OS X Yosemite will be available in the public beta form, as many of the interconnectivity features are dependent upon the unreleased iOS 8 mobile operating system, which is slated for a fall release.

According to The Loop, Apple has included a handy Feedback Assistant app for reporting bugs and issues with the public beta.

The final version of OS X Yosemite will be available as a free download for many Mac computers in the fall.

Those with an Apple ID can sign up for the public beta:

<https://appleseed.apple.com/sp/betaprogram/>

### Next Big Windows 8.1 Update Reportedly Coming Soon

Microsoft may be getting ready to release its second scheduled Windows 8.1 update of the year. Known as Windows 8.1 Update 2, the upcoming release is apparently smaller than Update 1, which was released earlier this year, and will arrive on Patch Tuesday, which is apparently scheduled for August 12 according to a leaked image posted on Russian website PCPortal.org.ru.

It is not clear what new features will be included in Windows 8.1 Update 2, or whether the update will only bring improvements and bug fixes. Neowin says the update will be smaller than the previous one, and may bring only enhancements to stability rather than front end features.

Similarly, it is not known whether the Start menu will return this year via Update 2. A recent leak suggested that Microsoft will bring it back in an upcoming software update, while a previous report said that the Start menu will only arrive next year, likely in Windows 9, the Microsoft's next-gen operating system.

Other details about Windows 8.1 Update 2 aren't available, except for the leaked image that mentions the release date for Windows 8.1 Update 2, which follows below.

### Lenovo Stops Selling Small-screen Windows Tablets in the U.S. Due to Lack of Demand

Lenovo has issued a statement explaining it is not permanently exiting the small-screen Windows tablet space in the U.S.

Lenovo has stopped selling Windows tablets with screen sizes under 10 inches in the U.S. due to lack of interest.

Lenovo has stopped selling two small-screen Windows tablets with 8-inch screens: the ThinkPad 8, which was announced in January and a model of Miix 2, which started shipping in October last year.

In North America, we're seeing stronger interest in the larger screen sizes for Windows tablets and are pleased with initial customer demand for the ThinkPad 10, said Raymond Gorman, a Lenovo spokesman, in an email.

The ThinkPad 8 is the most feature-packed small-screen Windows tablet available, with a 1080p screen and USB 3.0 port. But it was also riddled with charging, screen, connectivity and battery issues.

The remaining ThinkPad 8 stock has been redirected to developing countries, where there is more interest in small-screen Windows tablets, Gorman said.

In other markets, particularly Brazil, China, and Japan, the demand for

ThinkPad 8 has been much stronger, so we are adjusting our ThinkPad 8 inventories to meet increasing demand in those markets. If market demand for ThinkPad 8 changes, we will re-evaluate our strategy, Gorman said.

The 8-inch version of Miix 2 is not available and there is no other information about whether it will be again, according to a representative who answered the company's sales telephone line. However, Lenovo continues to sell Miix 2 with a 10.1-inch screen in the U.S.

Lenovo's 7- and 8-inch tablets are available only with Android. The tablets are priced between US\$129 and \$249.

Tablets are selling well, driven more by low-cost Android versions than Windows, which could explain Lenovo's move, said Bob O'Donnell, principal analyst at Technalysis Research.

It's impossible for Windows devices to compete, O'Donnell said.

It's easier to use Windows 8 with screen sizes of 10 inches or more, O'Donnell said.

Smaller Windows tablets don't make any sense anymore, he said.

However, there could be some exceptions. Small notebooks have done well in Japan and it would not be a surprise if small-screen Windows tablets did well in that market, O'Donnell said.

Microsoft's Windows 8.1, when it was released in 2012, was initially targeted at PCs and tablets with 10-inch screens or larger. But the OS was extended to smaller screens with growing adoption of 7-inch Android tablets. However, there have been questions about whether Windows 8, which combines a tablet and desktop OS, would work well on 8-inch screens.

Dell, Toshiba and Acer are among a handful of companies selling small-screen Windows tablets. Microsoft in May reportedly planned to announce a small-screen Windows 8.1 RT tablet along with the Surface Pro 3, but scrapped plans at the last minute.

Microsoft wants device makers to build low-cost Windows devices and has said it would license the OS to hardware partners at no cost. The company in May announced Windows 8.1 with Bing, which would be sold license-free to hardware makers.

With the back-to-school period in full swing, many companies are also adjusting product shipments to meet growing demand for PCs and tablets. Dell recently stopped online shipments of Chromebooks to meet existing orders for the laptops.

#### Users Unhappy With Social Media

It turns out people are not so content with the services providing their online social interactions regardless of how much time they may spend on their social media accounts.

That's according to a new report on e-business released Tuesday from the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI), an annual survey of 70,000

US consumers that measures their satisfaction with the products and services they use from both foreign and domestic firms with large presences in US markets. The e-business report looks at social media, portals, search engines, online news outlets, and opinion websites.

Social media websites are among the companies with the lowest scores in the index. The report attributes these low scores to privacy concerns among users and the increasing proliferation of ads on sites such as Facebook and Twitter. Both sites have recently rolled out new features that let users buy items directly from their Facebook news feeds and through paid-for tweets.

ACSI gave Internet social media an overall score of 71 out of 100, up 4.4 percent from last year. But it is still the fourth lowest-scoring category in ACSI, "just above airlines (69), subscription television (65), and Internet service providers (63)," according to the report.

While Facebook climbed five points to a score of 67, it is the lowest-scoring social-media website, just behind LinkedIn and Twitter. And data was collected for this survey before news broke that Facebook had deliberately manipulated users' news feeds for purposes of an academic study. Because this news angered many Facebook users, it is possible its ACSI score could have been even lower had data been collected after the fact.

LinkedIn saw its highest score to date at 67, as did Twitter at 69. This follows a Twitter site redesign and platform changes that make it easier for users to "integrate photos and videos," in addition to incorporating real-time interactive pop-up Web notifications.

Wikipedia was the only site to see a decline in user satisfaction. It fell four points to a rating of 74. But it's still in second place after Pinterest, which has claimed the top spot for social media scores.

"Consumers have a new darling in social bookmarking site Pinterest, which climbs 6% to an ACSI score of 76," the report states. "The site has made steady gains with pinners over the past three years by adding features and smarter search functions."

As people continue to transition to smart phones and tablets to access Internet services, social media sites are lagging behind other e-business websites for performance on different devices, according to the report.

"Freshness of content and ease of navigation varies widely among individual websites, but on average, social media sites do not compare well to other online businesses in any measure of the user experience," the report states, noting, however, that overall satisfaction with e-businesses climbed by 2.9 percent to a score of 73.4.

Customer satisfaction with portals and search engines performed better, garnering an average score of 80, thanks in large part to Google's dominance. The search giant performed well ahead of all competitors in the ACSI rating.

Customer satisfaction with news and opinion sites moved up only one point to 74, which the report attributes mainly to increased readership of non-mainstream media outlets.

## Your Kids Are Worried About How Much Time You Spend Online

The next time you feel the urge to harangue your kids to spend less time with their faces attached to screens and more time in the real world, be careful: They may deliver the same lecture right back at you.

A survey commissioned by the UK's New Forest National Park Authority reveals that when it comes to screen time, parents are big, fat hypocrites—at least in the eyes of their offspring.

The results shouldn't come as a surprise to any smartphone-wielding parent. While six in 10 parents in the survey worry that their kids are spending too much time in front of a screen, nearly seven in 10 children feel the same way about Mom and Dad.

Other results from the survey:

- Roughly a third of kids worry that their parents have a hard time separating themselves from their gadgets.

- 25 percent of kids feel Mom and Dad have a double standard when it comes to managing screen time.

- One in five British tykes feel their parents are so busy checking email on their phones that they aren't even listening (what, were you saying something?).

- Perhaps to assuage their loneliness, four in 10 children have communicated via text or social media with parents in the same room.

The Park Authority commissioned the survey to promote its new Tech Creche—a safe place for parents and kids alike to park their gadgets so they can fully appreciate the bounties of nature.

This problem is hardly limited to Britain. According to a 2013 survey by eMarketer, U.S. adults spend an average of more than 2 hours and 20 minutes a day using their mobile devices, not including talk time nearly an hour more than they did the year previous.

Tamara Sanderson, who created TimeAway, which helps parents manage the time their kids spend using smartphones, says she was inspired to create the Android app by observing parents and their kids at a shopping mall.

There were lots of families together, but everyone was on their phones or tablets, she says. It felt strange to be in a world where everyone was physically together but mentally apart. I started blogging on the concept, and then it evolved into an app idea.

Then she started using TimeAway herself and discovered that she was spending way more time staring at her own smartphone than she realized. That's why her next app will help adults manage their own screen time.

BeAway, due out this fall, will enable parents to put limits on their own bad habits—to, say, keep them from checking work email after 10 p.m. or wasting hours on Facebook. If they break the rules, the app will force them to put down the phone or pay a nominal penalty to a charity.

And, of course, they'll really hear about it from their kids.

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